REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 6, 8-21, and 26-54 are pending in the application. Claims 6, 8-18, 26-36, 50, 51, and 54 are allowed. Claims 1-3, 19-21, 37-48, and 52 stand rejected. Claims 49 and 53 stand objected to.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and the remarks hereinbelow.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Claims 6, 8-18, 26-36, 50, 51 and 54 are allowable based upon the decision of the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences filed June 16, 2004 and as indicated in the current Office Action mailed September 8, 2004. The applicants respectfully thank the examiner for the indication of this allowable subject matter. Further, the Examiner has objected to claims 49 and 53 as being dependent upon a rejected claim, but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent from including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 49 and 53 have been so amended. The applicants further thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter as to these claims.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. 102:

Claims 1-3, 19-21, 37, 39, 41, 46 and 47 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Walker (U.S. 6,312,106). Claims 1 – 3 and 19 - 21 have been cancelled. Claims 37, 39, 41, 46 and 47 now each ultimately depend upon claim 53.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. 103:

Claims 38, 40, 42-45, 48 and 52 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker (U.S. 6,312,106) in view of Bullock et al. (U.S. 5,699,091). Claims 38, 40, 42 – 45, 48 and 52 now ultimately depend upon claim 53.

It is respectfully submitted, therefore, that in view of the above amendments and remarks, that this application is now in condition for allowance, prompt notice of which is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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